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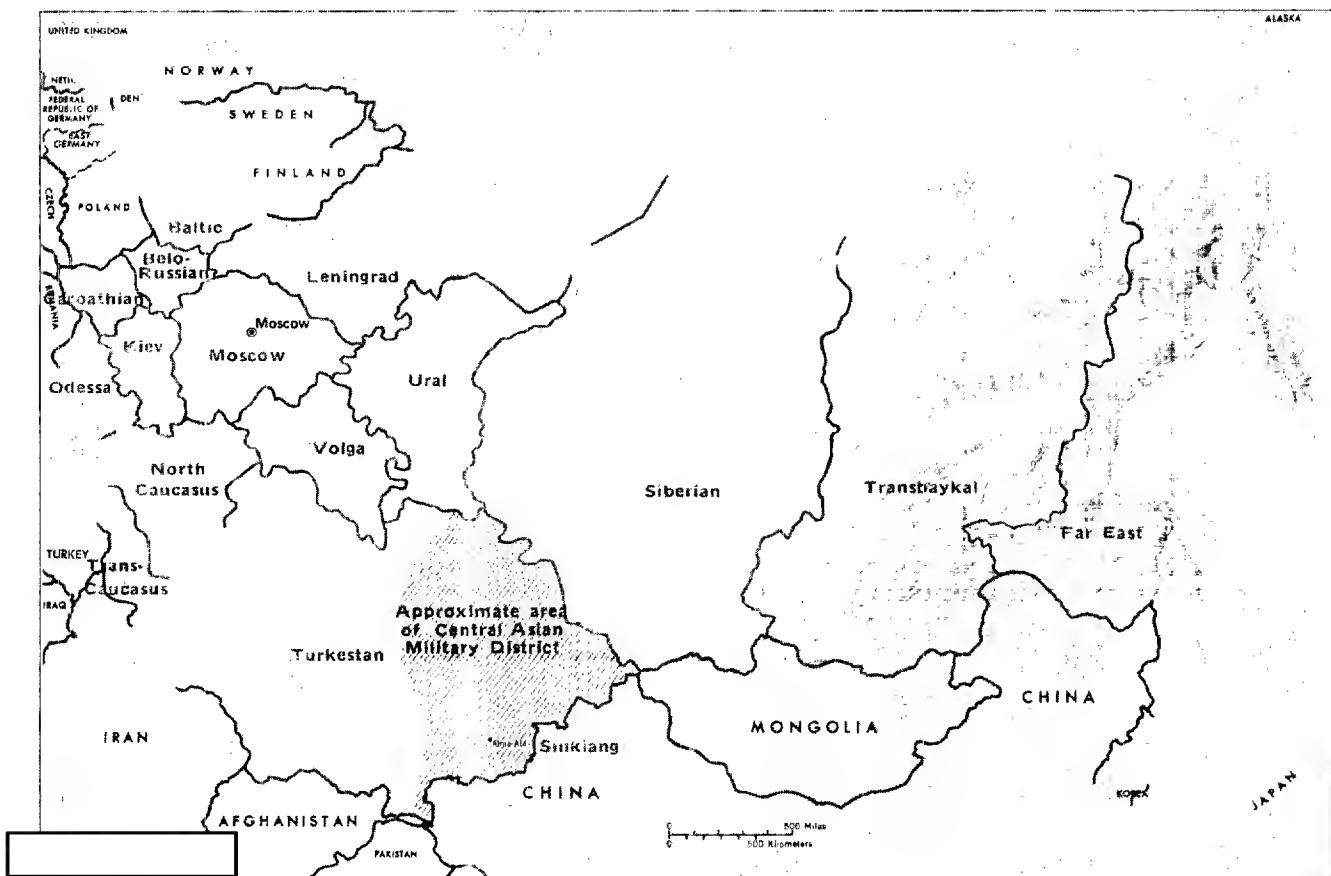


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Soviets Establish New Military District Along Chinese Border



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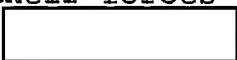
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USSR: The Soviets have established a new military district opposite China's Sinkiang Province.

The military district is the territorial organization that provides the administrative machinery through which the Ministry of Defense controls ground and tactical air forces in the USSR. There had previously been 15 districts.

Civil radio and press reports from Alma Ata in Kazakhstan last week contained the first references to a "Central Asian Military District." Troops of the district marched in the military parade in Alma Ata on 7 November and were reviewed by the district's commander, General of the Army N. G. Lyashchenko. Lyashchenko was previously commander of the Turkestan Military District.

The new district probably was formed from the eastern half of the Turkestan Military District and most likely has its headquarters at Alma Ata. It almost certainly was established to improve command and control of Soviet forces near the Sinkiang border, the scene of several clashes with Chinese forces this summer. The Soviets have been strengthening their forces in this area over the past four years.  (Map)

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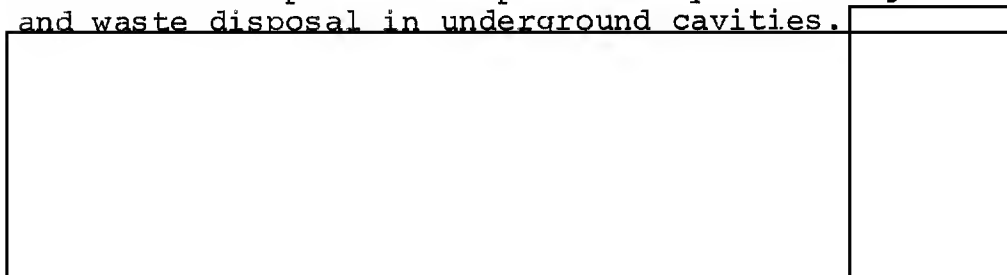
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USSR: The Soviets have made their first public disclosure of underground experiments in the peaceful uses of nuclear explosives.

A recent issue of Komsomolskaya Pravda mentioned three tests--a cratering experiment and two tests which explored the possibility of storage and waste disposal in underground cavities.



Limited details concerning two of the three underground tests were presented privately at a US-USSR conference on peaceful uses of nuclear explosives in Vienna last April. Subsequently, the Soviets expressed interest in conducting nuclear explosions for peaceful uses in other countries. Public disclosures of details concerning past experiments may generate an interest on the part of foreign nations in any future Soviet sales effort.

The Soviets have been invited to participate in a US-sponsored conference on peaceful uses of nuclear explosives in January 1970. The invitation has not been accepted to date.



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Cambodia: A substantial portion of recent large rice imports into Cambodia may be intended for the Communists in South Vietnam.

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two shipments that arrived in Sihanoukville in late October are to go to the Viet Cong. [REDACTED] another Chinese shipment of 10,000 tons is due in late November.

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It seems unlikely, however, that all the rice delivered so far is meant for the Communists. Phnom Penh has been seeking rice imports as a stop-gap measure to halt speculation that has disrupted the domestic market and prevented Cambodia from meeting Communist requirements.

Moreover, these tonnages of rice are high, both in terms of current Communist needs from external sources and their ability to transport and store the rice. The recent formalizing of trade procedures with Phnom Penh may indicate that the Communists want to establish larger stockpiles in their base areas in Cambodia. This would guard against a repetition of last summer's embargo by Cambodia on food shipments to the Viet Cong.

There are early indications that Cambodia will have a bumper rice crop later this year. As a result, rice shipments from Cambodia to the Viet Cong might soon return to normal patterns.

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Burma - Communist China: The Burmese have removed a major irritant in their relations with China.

They have released 27 overseas Chinese political detainees, some of whom had been held since the 1967 riots in Rangoon. These riots were provoked by the propaganda activities of personnel from the Chinese Communist Embassy.

For several weeks Burmese officials have professed to see signs of a thaw in Peking's attitude on mutual relations. This view may have prompted General Ne Win, in an annual policy address on 6 November before the government party conference, to express a strong interest in improving relations. Having made these conciliatory moves, Ne Win will probably await Peking's response before taking any further action.

With the release of the overseas Chinese in Rangoon, Peking may now feel free to restore diplomatic relations.

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Any real Sino-Burmese rapprochement, however, will require the Chinese to back away from their support of Burmese Communist insurgency, something that Peking as yet has shown little interest in doing.

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Tunisia: The new government formed last Friday confirms the primacy of Presidency Secretary Bahi Ladgham and the political eclipse of former economic czar Ahmed ben Salah.

President Bourguiba's selection of Ladgham, his long-time associate, for the newly created post of prime minister was expected; for the past two months, Ladgham has functioned as de facto prime minister. The principal innovation in the presidential decree defining the prime minister's functions concerns his authority to preside over the Council of the Republic when the president is unable to do so. The council is the policy-making body comprising the cabinet and the Destourian Socialist Party's political bureau. A provision for the prime minister to succeed to the presidency in case of the president's death or disability may be proposed to the National Assembly as a constitutional amendment. Last year, Bourguiba indicated this line of succession was being planned.

Ahmed ben Salah, who lost his economic portfolios in September when his agricultural reforms were repudiated, was divested of his only remaining portfolio, the Education Ministry. He also lost his position as assistant secretary general of the Destourian Socialist Party.

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